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PAGE 01 SEOUL 08055 210939Z
ACTION EA-12
INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
I-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 /073 W
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY BAFlack DATE 2/12/80

P R 210839Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6558
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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E.O. 11652: N A
TAGS: SOPN PINT KS US
SUBJ: KOREAN PRESS COVERAGE OF PAK TONG-SON CASE
REF: SEOUL 7995 (DTG 200908Z SEP 77)
SUMMARY: KOREAN PRESS REPORTS LACK OF PROGRESS ON PAK CASE IN MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS, NOTING LACK OF FLEXIBILITY IN U.S. POSITION. SOME ATTENTION IS DIRECTED TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S NEWS CONFERENCE TOMORROW AND TO WHETHER FONMINS MEET AGAIN. END SUMMARY.
1. ON SEPTEMBER 21, KOREAN VERNACULAR PRESS GAVE FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE TO STORIES FROM THEIR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS ON 9/20 MEETING BETWEEN FONMIN PAK TONG-JIN AND SECSTATE VANCE. COVERAGE IN MORNING PAPERS, ESPECIALLY HAN'GUK ILBO, WAS HOPEFUL THAT COMPROMISE ON PAK TONG-SON CASE WOULD BE REACHED, BUT AFTERNOON PRESS GAVE FRONT-PAGE, SECOND TREATMENT TO ARTICLES OUTLINING LACK OF PROGRESS. TONGA ILBO HEADLINE: "KOREA-U.S. COMPROMISE FAILS."
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2. MORNING CHOSON ILBO'S KIM TAE-JUNG, QUOTING U.S. NEWSPAPERS AND LEADING CONGRESSMEN BEFORE MEETING, NOTED U.S. VIEW THAT "PAK MUST BE EXTRADITED", ESPECIALLY STATEMENTS BY SENATOR STEVENSON, CHAIRMAN OF SENATE ETHICS COMMITTEE, THAT "KOREA'S UNCOOPERATIVE POSITION IS PROVOCATIVE AND UNPRODUCTIVE" AND THAT SENATE WOULD START ITS OWN INVESTIGATION INTO PAK SCANDAL. "INFORMED SOURCES" ALSO TOLD KIM THAT MOST IMPORTANT THING IN U.S. INVESTIGATIONS IS THAT PAK PROVIDE A "FREE AND THOROUGH EXPOSURE OF THE WHOLE CASE," WHICH KIM EXPLAINED MEANT NO ROK OFFICIALS PRESENT WHEN PAK MEETS U.S. INVESTIGATORS. KIM'S ARTICLE ALSO GIVES EXTRACTS FROM WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL TO EFFECT THAT ISSUE IN SOLUTION OF PAK AFFAIR IS U.S. PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ALL U.S. COMMITMENTS AND PROMISES TO KOREA. EDIT NOTES THAT SENATOR MCGOVERN'S SUGGESTION FOR RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA DOES NOT REPRESENT CONSIDERED VIEWS OF U.S. PEOPLE BUT DOES ACCURATELY REFLECT MOOD IN WASHINGTON CAUSED BY KOREA'S COVERUP OF PAK AFFAIR.
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POST CONCLUDES THAT HARDENING OF THIS MOOD WOULD NOT BE IN KOREA'S INTEREST. ARTICLE SAYS.

3. AFTERNOON PRESS REPORTED THAT TWO FONMINS FAILED TO FIND COMPROMISE PLAN TO SOLVE PAK AFFAIR. TONGA ILBO, NOTING SECSTATE VANCE HAD ASKED AGAIN FOR PAK'S RETURN, REMARKED ON LACK OF FLEXIBILITY OR RELAXATION IN PREVIOUS U.S. POSITION. SEVERAL PAPERS NOTED THAT FONMIN PAK HAD EXPRESSED HOPE U.S. WOULD ADVANCE SEVERAL ALTERNATIVES FOR COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT, BUT THERE WAS NO U.S. RESPONSE. SEVERAL STORIES QUOTED "SOURCES" AS SAYING THAT FONMIN PAK HINTED THAT ROKG HOPES FOR DISPATCH OF U.S. INVESTIGATORS TO SEOUL, BUT AGAIN THE U.S. AVOIDED ANSWERING. TONGA ARTICLE SAID "ATTENTION IS CENTERED" ON WHETHER THIS MARKS

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END OF CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN FONMINS, OR WHETHER MEETING IS CONTINUED IN NEW YORK AS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED. KYONGHYANG SINMUN HINTED THAT FONMIN PAK EXPRESSED GRATITUDE THAT U.S., IN PROCESS OF CONVEYING ITS HARD-LINE POSITION ON PAK AFFAIR, HAD NOT MADE "A CERTAIN SORT OF STATEMENT." (COMMENT: PRESUMABLY THIS IS A REFERENCE TO LACK OF USG PUBLIC THREATS TO CUT OFF MILITARY OR ECONOMIC AID IF KOREA DID NOT TURN OVER PAK TONG-SON). SAME ARTICLE PORTRAYED FONMIN PAK AS "STRONGLY HINTING" THAT PAK CASE WILL NOT LAST INTO NEXT YEAR.

5. IN A SMALL ARTICLE, KYONGHYANG NOTED THAT STATE DEPARTMENT BROKE PRECEDENT BY NOT SENDING ANYONE TO AIRPORT TO MEET FONMIN PAK. SHORT WIRE SERVICE ITEMS IN SEOUL SINMUN NOTE PRESIDENT CARTER MET DEMOCRATIC LEADERS 9/20 AND SAID KOREA HAS BEEN "NO HELP SO FAR" IN SENDING PAK BACK AND THAT CARTER WILL HAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE 9/21 WHICH WILL ADDRESS PAK TONG-SON AFFAIR, AMONG OTHER TOPICS.

6. NO EDITORIALS OR OTHER COMMENTS HAVE YET APPEARED ON MEETINGS AT STATE DEPARTMENT. NOR IS THERE ANY MENTION OF A PRESS CONFERENCE BY PAK TONG-SON'S LAWYER HUNDLEY.

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